



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved CONTRACTED SERVICE OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

Thursday, May 13, 2010

12:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL110(Madison Municipal Building)

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Staff: Chuck Kamp, Wayne Block, Ann Schroeder

Guest: Dar Ward

Present: 5 -

Bruce K. Sylvester; Mark M. Opitz; Rob Kennedy; Mick Howen and Susan M. Schmitz

Absent: 3 -

Jed Sanborn; Rick Rose and Margaret Bergamini

Excused: 3 -

Rindert Kiemel, Jr.; Ahnaray Bizjak and Jacquelyn M. Dahlke

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Sylvester moved approval of the minutes; Kennedy seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

4. [15890](#)

Update on RTA

Opitz said the RTA Board met for the second time in late April and established two subcommittees: Plan for Transit and Bylaws. Chair Dick Wagner has appointed members. Opitz is on the Plan for Transit Subcommittee. The group also heard presentation about the oversight duties of the MPO. The slideshow is available on their website. The next meeting is in Middleton on May 26th. Kamp added that at the TDP Committee meeting after CSOS, part of the discussion will be about how interface with the RTA.

5. [18350](#)

Status of Data Requests

Kamp said Metro is working on a new report that will separate interlined routes. The new reporting system will show the old format and each route singled out. We have some problems with the new reporting system that has caused a delay. If you have more data requests, send them to Ann Schroeder. We have met some of the University's data requests for negotiations purposes.

6. [18351](#)

Financial Report

Attachments: [12-2009 financial performance-audited.pdf](#)

We have been through the audit. Key points include that we are returning \$394,299 to our reserves. So reserves have increased to almost \$800,000. Our goal is to get up to \$2 million in reserves. This is a nice step in that direction. Sylvester asked what accounts for the surplus. Kamp said salaries savings was closer to our overtime overrun than we thought, about \$50,000 compared to \$200,000 estimated. We also got a refund from our insurance carrier for our good safety record. Kamp also mentioned that Metro got an award for most improved transit system for our safety record from our insurance carrier.

Block said one of the largest differences between estimated and actual is revenue. Even though we increased passenger revenue by \$926,000, we are also that much under our budget projection. There was a drop in ridership that seems to do with fuel prices and the economy in addition to some influence from the fare increase. Kamp said we didn't expect the large shift in ridership categories. There was a much larger shift away from cash and 10-ride tickets and a dramatic increase in monthly passes. Our projections were close on overall ridership but off on ridership categories. Opitz asked if Block meant the economy was affecting ridership in that fewer people are traveling to. Block said that is the assumption.

There is a national drop in ridership for transit agencies. Kamp said Metro is compared to size peers and service level peers. For all service systems in an American Public Transportation Association (APTA) survey, most system have been experiencing ridership decreases around 4% while Metro has increased 1.5%. Block said many other transit agencies also had fare increases. Some did not. But even with our increase, we have fared better than most other agencies in the country. We still increased our revenue by almost \$1 million even though it didn't meet our projections. We also had additional advertising revenue. Funding partners went over in revenue, but has so many factors. One big reason is an increase in Madison Metropolitan School District hours of service.

Natural gas is another large difference. We budgeted when fuel prices were at their highest. An anticipated increase did not occur, but the budget was already in place, so we realized significant savings. We also had significant savings in fuel and oil. We budgeted a good price and locked into contract. We also have more hybrids and more new buses with better fuel economy. Kennedy asked whether Metro will budget less for fuel next year because of the purchase of additional hybrids. Kamp said we won't because we probably won't get as good a fuel price. Inter-departmental charges were over budget mostly related to snow removal. Capital debt repayment is over because of a major refinancing of general obligation debt. We ended up paying more of the

principal this year but in the future the savings will be significant.

7. [18352](#) Route Productivity

Attachments: [Route Productivity Mar10 \(2\).pdf](#)

Kamp said we hope to provide this in greater detail route by route in the coming months. Overall ridership is up 1.5%. This report is the last one that will have data with old fare vs. new fare. The second quarter of this year will compare new fare to new fare because it went into effect April of last year. Productivity is down because we've added service, so some new routes like Route 10 in Madison and Route 59 in Fitchburg will take time to build up ridership. Metro added buses on some routes to help with overloading. Ridership didn't go up a lot, so productivity is down. But it helps with overloads.

It is interesting that the route 80s ridership and productivity dropped. One might consider that a good thing because those routes are so crowded. Ridership is a challenge to count on the Route 80s because fares are not paid. Metro is constantly monitoring the 80s to see if new drivers on those routes are counting ridership correctly. But these are the best numbers we have. Kennedy thinks the actual rate is 10% to 20% higher. Schmitz asked about the late night circulator. Ward said that is another driver count issue. Kennedy said there are also changes to where UW students are living within walking distance of campus. Schmitz said having the late night bus is a big safety issue.

Opitz received a complaint about some of the other fixed route buses being crowded, especially Route 70, due to students. He wondered if some students were migrating from the 80s to other routes. Kennedy and Ward agreed that is the case. The 80s don't go very far west, so the students need to use other routes.

Kamp said he is proud of changes made specifically to improve performance, such as on Route 6. Time was added to the schedule, which meant more buses. It was not really expanded service, but now this route can stay on time. It cost about \$100,000 to make this improvement. Changes like this are based on feedback from the public and from drivers.

Schmitz asked where the new hybrids will be used. Kamp said Metro will target them where we get the most fuel savings. Schmitz said the more hybrids that can be on State Street the better. Hybrids generate fewer complaints from people downtown because they are quieter and don't have such a diesel smell. Metro plans to put in the next 5 year bus procurement an option for articulated buses perhaps for campus.

8. [08290](#) Reports of Member Communities/Institutions

Opitz (Middleton) – They met with Metro staff to talk about amending the plan they had for the TIGER grant and trying again for TIGER II funding. They plan a phased approach to develop an ultimate parking solution. The Veteran's Administration is locating their billing center in Middleton at the former Full

Compass site. Transit access was a factor.

Kennedy (UW) – They start a big detour of the bus system on Monday. They will have a group of students in the summer looking at revising the routes of the 81 and 82. Maybe tighten up the schedules, serve University Avenue and have some buses be more frequent. Schmitz asked if any detours will affect the Campus Drive bike path. They won't.

Howen (MMSD) – Howen asked Kamp to explain the current dodger situation. Kamp said Metro recently had their Federal Transit Authority (FTA) required Triennial Review. One deficiency identified is related to school bus service. Rules say that federally funded transit systems cannot unfairly compete with yellow bus companies for school service. However, there is some disagreement about what constitutes acceptable tripper service and unfair competition. The consultants took a hard line during the Metro review and said the structure of our tripper service was unacceptable. We are working through discussing this with the FTA. Metro filed for a formal extension on this issue. Other Wisconsin transit systems have not had this issue come up in their reviews, and Metro has been through reviews in the past where this same service did not come up as an issue. Sylvester asked about the politics behind the situation. Kamp said if the FTA upholds this finding, Metro could easily see a loss of ¾ of our dodger service, which equals about 1 million rides a year.

Verona (Sylvester) – Sylvester had nothing to report.

Madison (Schmitz) – At the last Transit and Parking Commission meeting, they approved the Low Income Buss Pass Program Committee final report. The group came up with a really good program. Now the reduced fare pass is an on-going part of available fare programs, and eligibility has been expanded from those with a Quest card to those who self-certify an income at or below 150% of federal poverty level. For 2010, Metro has enough funding to sell 300 of the reduced fare passes a month. The Metro location has been selling out prior to the end of the month in the last several months. The committee urged expanding this program in the future.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12.55 PM.